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PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY EXHIBITION

The exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, though numbered only the 74th in the annual series—which had more than one interruption during the century—marks the Academy's 100th anniversary. Organized in 1805, this oldest of American art institutions holds to-day a place of foremost influence and importance, and its annual exhibitions have become universally recognized as those which most widely and completely represent from year to year the best achievement of contemporary American art. In comprehensive extent and in general opulence of effect, the present exhibition is of surpassing interest.

The commemorative idea has been emphasized by a sort of retrospective exhibition of examples of painters associated with the century-long history of the Academy, from Charles Wilson Peale down through Sully and Neagle, Lambdin, Waugh, Schussele to Hovenden, who himself is becoming arrayed among the fathers.

The very first impression received of this remarkable collection of modern paintings is that of the great variety and many different kinds of subjects exhibited, and while this is true in a sense—there are hundreds of pictures recorded in the catalogue and of all descriptions—it cannot be denied that in all of the galleries the pictures that attract the most immediate attention are the portraits and the portrait-studies. There are beautiful landscapes and many agreeable marines, but they are not the things which strike the eye at a first glance. They are there, but they must be sought. The landscape painters seem not to hold the prominence that has been theirs in recent years. On the other hand, we have the decorative painters in every degree, from Abbey's gorgeous tableau of the "Trial of Queen Catherine" to a huge Madonna by Lafarge, or from Miss Oakley's panels for the Harrisburg Capitol to Maxfield Parrish's Italian gardens.

In the place of honor, on the west wall of the Temple Gallery, hangs Sargent's exquisite portrait of "Lady Hamilton," without doubt one of the greatest works of this famous artist and one which, considered in relation to his other portraits in the same gallery, is exceedingly significant. It has none of the bold, slap-dash, "painty" effect which is produced by so many of Sargent's recent American portraits. While it is painted with perfect freedom, it has an atmosphere of poetry and sentiment, a suavity and a richness of tone not to be found in the other portraits by the same painter, which hang near by.

Two portraits hanging in the west corners of the room are of interest. One is a very fine example of the work of Cecilia Beaux, a portrait of Mrs. Larz Anderson. While painted in the bold and free manner which has marked all of her later work, it has a clarity and a certain fineness that has been absent from Miss Beaux's more recent pictures. A capital likeness of a very pretty woman, it is not marred by that note of brutality which is supposed to pass for strength. The treatment of the white frock is worthy of particular attention. The other notable portrait at this end of the room is that of Emma Eames, painted by her husband, Julian Story, a thoroughly charming work. The figure is beautifully posed, regal and commanding, the lines graceful and the decorative effect quite gorgeous.

Near these, on the north wall, are two portraits and a portrait study by John W. Alexander. These individualistic paintings are possessed of characteristics so entirely their own that in a way they may be said to stand out among all the pictures in the gallery, although they are low in tone, and, as portraits, most unconventional. They are painted on absorbent canvas and in transparent colors, and the effect which Alexander produces in this way is of unusual smoothness and charm.

In the centre of another section of the north wall hangs a portrait by Frank W. Benson, which he calls "Lady Trying on a Hat." It represents a woman in a white frock giving the proper "set" to a big black hat. Her face is almost concealed by the droop of this "creation," but as an example of successful

figure painting this has a particular value. Benson is a fine technician, and this is one of the best things that he has done.

It is probable that the habitue of exhibitions, before devoting much attention to these interesting portraits, will have pounced with avidity upon the nine Whistler landscapes which hang at the end of the room, and which, in many respects, from a "professional" viewpoint, are among the real gems of the century exhibition. Seven of these are rapid sketches, diminutive pictures, entirely characteristic of the painter. One is in water color; those in oil are done in body color, before he finally achieved such extraordinary effects by his use of transparent colors. In this respect they are somewhat disappointing. One might almost say that the secret of the perfect use of transparent color died with Whistler, so wonderful were the things that he did with it, so that his older pictures, in which he makes use of body color exclusively, seem much more obvious. The present exhibition includes "Blue and Gray, Trouville," "The Queen's Naval Jubilee, 1897," "The Sloop," "On the Normandy Coast," "A Street in Old Chelsea," "Off the Brittany Coast," and "Gray Note: The Mouth of the Thames." In addition to these, there are two large marines of unusual interest, "Deep Sea," a wonderful windy, white-capped expanse of ocean, and "The Sea," a dull, gray-green, bleak picture that is particularly lovely.

Only a hasty reference can be made to the more notable pictures which remain.

Alfred H. Maurer's "Mlle. Jeanne" is a dark, brown-toned picture of a French milliner in a red hat, and carrying a big bandbox. He also shows, besides a clever café interior, a very good example in his "On the Stairway," a dark, suggestive picture representing some figures mounting a staircase and passing through a bright spot of light which shines down from above. There are also two superb examples of still life by Chase, and on the north wall an exquisite picture by T. W. Dewing called "The Spinnet." This is one of the "gems" of the collection, rich and golden in tone and most beautifully painted. Further on is an example of Winslow Homer's most recent style. Great pyramidal waves rush by a boat, in which there are three sailors. The crest of one of the waves apparently touches the full moon. Only in particular spots do these waves look at all wet or like real water. The picture has that windy sweep which marks all of Homer's latest work, but this one is less convincing than usual.

On the east wall, at the left of the door, hangs "Autumn," one of the finest examples of the work of Hugh H. Breckenridge that he has ever shown in the Academy. Brilliant and warm in coloring, it has that depth and effect of atmospheric distance that is sometimes lacking in this artist's highly keyed work. There is a sense of reality about this picture that in spite of the brilliance and vividness of its tone is wonderfully agreeable. Over this is a long panel by Alexander Harrison, a very dark, cloudy marine, that if viewed from a great distance is very effective.

Some of the paintings shown here were seen last fall in the so-called Comparative Show in New York, and these add materially to the display here, the catalogue of which contains 1,029 numbers—too many to do more than indicate the more prominent features.

M. B.

A collection of "old masters" owned by a citizen of Brooklyn has been cut down in value from \$170,000 to \$9,075 by a jury of art experts. Such desecration was all the more painful to the artistic sensibilities of the owner that he was endeavoring to swap these gems for suburban real estate.

So the "collection of old masters business" is going merrily along. We remember the sale of a collection, a few years since, which had been exhibited in the old Academy of Design building on Twenty-third street. Most of the pictures were bought back by the original vendor, and are now in a pawnshop on Sixth avenue. An excellent place to bring gullible to with a story of how a rich family is disposing of priceless gems. To all which I say: beware.

The most important sale thus far has been the Waggaman collection at Mendelsohn Hall and the American Art Association.

Mr. Waggaman had a theory that the art of the past hundred years is best represented by the works of the English school, the Barbizon group, the modern Dutch school and two or three American painters. Dutch pictures predominated, and no other collection in America was so rich in these works. The gem of the collection was "Grandfather's Consolation" by Joseph Israels, which has the atmospheric quality of the artist's "Alone in the World," with more of refinement, cheerfulness and charm of color. It came originally from the Forbes collection in London. The Anton Mauve: "Sheep Coming Out of the Forest," is the peer of any important Mauve in this country, while the Jacob Maris: "Dordrecht" is one of this artist's most important works.

In the Japanese part of this remarkable collection the owner had the good fortune to be advised by such an expert as Mr. Shugio, who was art commissioner from Japan at all the recent so-called World's fairs. He also had the counsel of Professor Morse, of Salem, Mass., a high authority in Japanese ceramics, and of Tozo Takayanagi. The result was a collection which could not be rivaled, some specimens being exceptionally rare.

The result of the auction may be followed under the "Sales" Department.

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The Dutch school has again come prominently to the fore. The Waggaman collection, showing the three best pictures of the modern Dutch, had also many other examples which attracted attention because of their intrinsic merit. Mr. Waggaman must have congratulated himself on his far-sightedness, for the Mauve, for instance, which had been in his possession about twenty years, cost him less than \$2,000. A pretty good investment.

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One of the healthiest signs of our time in art collectorship is the firm hold which modern Dutch art has taken upon the favor of American collectors. Quite a number of years ago, when French art was in the ascendancy, and German art still had upon our public a grasp which it was destined to lose, Michael Knoedler had the courage to exploit the Dutchmen. I imagine that he found little profit in it for a long time. In fact, I am inclined to think that those who succeeded to his business, and who continued to press the merits of the men of the dykes and dunes on their patrons, had for a while their labor for their pains. Such work progresses gradually always, but it progresses. Gradually, however, the market was extended. Other houses began to advance the good cause. The critical intelligence of American collectors was rapidly widening. Our native artists no longer all flocked to Munich or Paris to study, but a contingent of them wandered into Holland. As the prospect brightened, stronger works of the Dutch painters appeared here. The powerful canvases of Josef Israels, the tender and seductive pages from the great book of nature of Mauve, the gusty and spirited marines of Mesdag, even an occasional masterpiece from that painter of masterpieces, Bosboom, proclaimed to Americans, as by blast of trumpet, that the great art of Holland had, indeed, risen from its grave of two centuries and more.

And now—recognized by all true lovers of art as masters of the craft, the Dutchmen stand in the front rank of the world's painters.

The exhibition of the work of the Lyme, Conn., coterie of artists at the National Arts Club brought together a collection of paintings most worthy and dignified. In the corner of the gallery I noticed a full-length "Girl Mending a Net," by Frank V. Dumond, which was exquisite in tonal quality. That the

designating term which these fourteen men have taken only refers to the locality where they spend their summers, and not to any affiliations of thought, is demonstrated by the widely diverging lines along which they work. All in their own way, however, express themselves amply and with the stamp of individual conception. Mr. Edward F. Rooke is a veritable antithesis to Dumond. His work is richly colored, yet harmonious and pleasing. His scenes are not laid exclusively around the drowsy Connecticut village, but he takes us also to tropical Mexico with its glaring colors. Gifford Beal, on the other hand, strikes a poetic note where he wanders along the waterside. This young artist is becoming more and more delightful in his grasp of the gentler side of nature. His canvases tinkle with the delicate light shades of a hazy sun. W. H. Howe's cattle pieces are no longer suffused with the bluish tone, which he affected some years back, but are deeper in color, truer to nature and, withal, more powerful. His bovine models are the perfection of anatomy, his browsing kine the ideal of cattle painting. Cullen Yates and Allen B. Talcot likewise contributed most satisfactorily to a collection which was creditable to American art.



GEO. M. REEVS.

PORTRAIT OF MR. C. L. B.

It is universally allowed that in portrait-painting realism is the dominant note. Idealism in portraiture is an insuperable defect, and yet for distinction's sake I may advance the paradoxical term of ideal realism to designate the work of one of our men, George M. Reeves. The lights and shadows that play upon the face in the searching studio-light, the wrinkle on the forehead, the blemish on the cheek, would not satisfy the more thoughtful quality of his mind, were he not able to realize his sitters' habits of thought, disposition and character, as these might reveal themselves upon their faces. His work in portraiture, therefore, shows a strongly marked individuality of an impersonal kind. Eschewing flattery, his work becomes, through its refined truthfulness, sculpturesque in character. The example of his work of which a reproduction is found above, shows the facial resemblance, together with the inward personality of the subject—a distinctive quality of all of Reeves's work.

George H. Boughton, whose boyhood had been spent in Albany, N. Y., but who had lived in London since 1862, died suddenly of heart disease last month in his London home. How memory flies back to a delightful evening spent with the genial painter at his studio at Campden Hill, some years since. He told me at the time of his early experiences in Albany, where he found the first outlet for his artistic feelings by painting illustrated signs, which he did with so much skill as to attract the attention of local artists. Encouraged and taught by them, he eventually abandoned this crude employment and went to New York and later, abroad. Boughton's favorite subjects were Puritan types and those Dutch maidens which vie in loveliness with the refined, classic features of the Mothers of the Revolution. His art expression may have been reminiscent of Munich and the French classicists; it was, nevertheless, sincere as to his view, and pleasing to the beholder.

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One of the most prominent exhibitors at the Dallas Art Association in Dallas, Texas, just closed, was Charles P. Gruppe, whose exhibit at the Philadelphia Art Club last month of collected works attracted merited attention. His twenty years' residence in Holland has imbued him with all the home-like subtleness and sincerity of the Dutch school. That his work is being appreciated is proved by the fact that he obtained the record of sales at any one-man's exhibition ever held in Philadelphia, twenty-nine of his paintings being sold at prices approximating \$10,000.

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Another American residing abroad, George Hitchcock, of Egmont Hoef, Holland, has held an exhibition of his work at the School of Design in Providence, R. I., which was the artist's birthplace. His career has been a brilliant one, marked by many official honors. His work declares a broad and active intelligence, with a technical skill ripened by discretion and experience, and while his brush revels in the brilliant colors, these are always handled with refinement and harmony.

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The almost romantic travels which a picture may follow was exemplified when, the other day, I visited the home of a friend and found hanging on the wall of his library a delightful monotone, signed W. G. Watt, which he told me he had picked up in Paris a few weeks ago, having been charmed by its subtle suggestiveness. When I took it in hand I recognized it as a beautiful example of that delusive art of painting on zinc for which myself had been bidding at a club auction sale of the old "Kit-Kat" some years ago. The picture had been bid in by a visitor, who had taken it to Paris and, in disposing of his black-and-whites, had relinquished possession. It is a wonderfully suggestive bit of landscape by one of our foremost engravers, whose art expression finds channels in many directions, as instanced by a wood engraving of exceptional merit, now hanging in the lobby of the Salmagundi Club.

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Robert Swain Gifford died recently in New York. He was born in Massachusetts in 1840. He studied in New Bedford under Albert Van Beest, a Dutch marine painter that settled there, from whom Gifford obtained much of his dexterity in depicting the sea and the shore. He was highly satisfactory as a water colorist and etcher. He did not take to water colors until 1865, after having made sketching tours on the Pacific coast and spent some time in Europe and Africa. In 1887 he obtained a medal at Philadelphia, and in New York in 1885 the \$2,500 prize was given him for his beautiful composition, "Near the Coast." Although most familiar to the public in white and black, in which he has no superior among living draughtsmen, he has painted in both mediums. His best

known compositions in oil are "Mount Hood," "View of the Garden Horn," "A Scene in Cairo," "The Egyptian Caravan," "The Salt Marshes of Holland," "The Shores of Buzzard's Bay." In aquarelles he achieved high rank by his "Autumn on the Seashore," "Algeria," "Venice" and "Low Tide."

Gifford was one of the earliest of American etchers. He acquired the art in solitary study, with no aid but a couple of popular text-books. His methods, therefore, were simple and orthodox. His early habit was to complete the drawing on a plate when working out of doors and then to bite it in with nitric acid. Sometimes he etched the dark parts first and then passed on to the lighter. He made but scant use of dry point, preferring it only for the putting in of a sky or the strengthening of a tint. Many of his plates are absolutely untouched with the point. He began etching when a mere boy and continued it out of sheer love for the work. Most of his plates were etched directly from nature, without retouching.



INTERIOR OF THE GEORGE GALLERY, WATERTOWN, N. Y.

Charles F. Naegle has been showing a choice collection of his latest works at the George Galleries in Watertown, N. Y. The work of this artist is well known. He paints with a very light impasto, and with pigments so fluent as to model readily under a soft brush, whereby his portrait and figure work receives its exquisite modulations of flesh with tender and easy strokes. At times, when compelled by the strength of his impressions, he gives his landscape vistas in bolder grasp.

An illustration of an interior view of the George Gallery, where this exhibition is held, is shown above. This is another place in our interior towns where art can be studied under the most favorable conditions. It is the owner's intention to hold each month an exhibition of the works of noted artists. The reputation of the gallery is of the highest and the artistic taste of the Watertown people well known, so that attractive exhibitions may be expected there for the advancement of art.

An important movement was set on foot in New York recently by the Fine Arts Federation. At a meeting held last week a scheme for a united fine arts building was not only reported upon favorably by a committee but heartily adopted by the federation. The project is to purchase land in the neighborhood of Fortieth Street on which to erect a spacious one-story building in which a great annual exhibition or salon can be held. The Academy of Design and the Society of American Artists are supposed to unite in "seeing the thing through," and once erected it is thought that rentals, gate receipts and the like will make the building self-supporting.